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A CATALOGUE OF THE DRAWINGS IN WATER-COLOR BY CHARLES BURCHFIELD, SHOWN AT THE KEVORKIAN GALLERIES, 40 WEST 57TH STREET, FROM FEBRUARY SIXTEENTH TO FEBRUARY TWENTY-EIGHTH, NINETEEN-TWENTY

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Burchfield, Charles Ephraim

Charles Burchfield was born in Ashtabula Harbor, Ohio, in 1893. His father, dying when he was four, he was taken by his mother to her birthplace, Salem, Ohio, where he has lived ever since.

A short period after public school years, at the Cleveland Art School, one very short visit to New York in 1916, service in the Camouflage Corps at Camp Jackson, in 1918—these constitute the few movements of his twenty-six years.

One has to read Sherwood Anderson's "Winesburg, Ohio," to understand the inner growth of the Burchfield boy. There is the temptation at first to rejoice in the Winesburgs and Salems that are producing such work as Burchfield's and Anderson's until the price they pay for their vision is realized. In the eyes of the young from all over the land can be seen the capacity for this vision; yet most often the work they show you is poor imitative stuff with the stamp of the magazines upon it. Then again we get sight of a gentle soul in whom the love of beauty is blocked, and violence results as in Burchfield.

The price can easily be estimated in his work. Too acute a realization, occasionally a slump in feeling and a blurred sensation, then with growing adjustment between sensation and power a terrible plunge forward with the idea thoroughly in hand and we have "Miner's Huts" or "The Corner Store," or "Backyards" or "Black Houses," or "The Railroad" in which you hear fairly the shriek of the whistle from the unseen train.

Occasionally only as yet, does Burchfield dare to be at peace with the life in his village on the edge of Industrial America, and to show us that already he can paint for sheer love of it, as in "Red Telegraph Poles," "The West Wind," "March Pools" and

many of the sketches made around Camp Jackson.

Generally, however, he makes us forget that these things are paintings, and rarely does anyone think of them as "Water colors." Instead we see into things and states of mind suddenly. It is all one with the work of Carl Sandburg. It is presentation at last in American Painting. Burchfield's Salem is one of the places with which the Spoon River people might have exchanged visits.

Old fashioned criticism will have little relation to these things. As a scholarly painter said to me recently after looking silently through a hundred odd sketches from Burchfield's brush, "If this is painting then I have spent my life wastefully in pursuing an understanding of methods and standards." Burchfield looks at his things after they are done—he has seen few good modern works in the originals—and marvels. Methods and standards are within for him.

What had saved him apparently from the oblivion of a Salem churchyard was, apparently, first the possession of a mother who could wish to further his love for art—Anderson has drawn such a mother—then the luck of working under H. G. Kellar in Cleveland, one of the few teachers who can release life in their students. He escaped largely the inhibiting pressure of the school by being "too unruly to get much out of it," as he innocently writes me.

His instinct for design shows his talent to be far from unruly, and proves his right to proclaim his own discovery of truth as truth for others because of its perfect connection with our universal demand for order beneath all. There is a recognizable musical element in his color and line, intense, nervous, vibrant, with room for growth in all directions.

Burchfield is one more youth of the new age, with power whose privilege it is to show us our insincerities and sentimentalities while never looking at us at all, only at the world we gave him to grow up in. Some of us older ones are ready to greet these youngsters as deliverers.—M. M. C.

LIST OF PAINTINGS IN WATER COLOR

1—MINER'S HUTS.
2—THE LITTLE HOME.
3—MARCH SUNLIGHT.
4—THE FIRST HYPATICAS.
5—THE BLACK-EYED SHED.
6—SPRING EVENING.
7—GOING HOME.
8—FACTORIES.
9—THE NIGHT RAIN.
10—WINTER NIGHT.
11—A TURN IN THE ROAD.
12—OLD BARN.
13—A STUMP.
14—HAUNTED HOUSE.
15—THE WOOD'S GREEN VAULT.
16—THE BLACK HOUSES.
17—A LITTLE TOWN.
18—THE LOCOMOTIVE.
19—THE KING OF THE WOODS.
20—AUTUMN IN THE SOUTH.
21—SATURDAY AFTERNOON.
22—RAINY IN THE STABLE YARD.
23—COTTONFIELDS.
24—A LITTLE CABIN.
25—NEGRO GOING HOME.

26—LONELY CHIMNEY.

27—WASH DAY.

28—CLEARING OF A SLEET STORM.

29—SUNLIGHT AFTER A SPRING RAIN.

30—FLIGHT OF BIRDS.

31—THE CORNER STORE.

32—NOISY SPRING BROOK.

33—SPRING LIGHT.

34—MARCH POOLS.

35—WIND OVER THE HILL.
(Loaned by Mrs. Mowbray-Clarke.)

36—BACKYARDS.

37—AFTERNOON OVER THE CITY.

38—THE CAVE.

39—OLD BARN.

40.—DAFFODILS.

41—THE RIVER.

42—THE MINE.

43—RED TELEGRAPH POLES.

44—HOT SUMMER AFTERNOON.

45—AFTER THE STORM.

46—FREIGHT CAR DWELLINGS.

47—JUNE MORNING.

48—BLAST FURNACE.

49—THE WEST WIND.

50—HAUNTED EVENING.

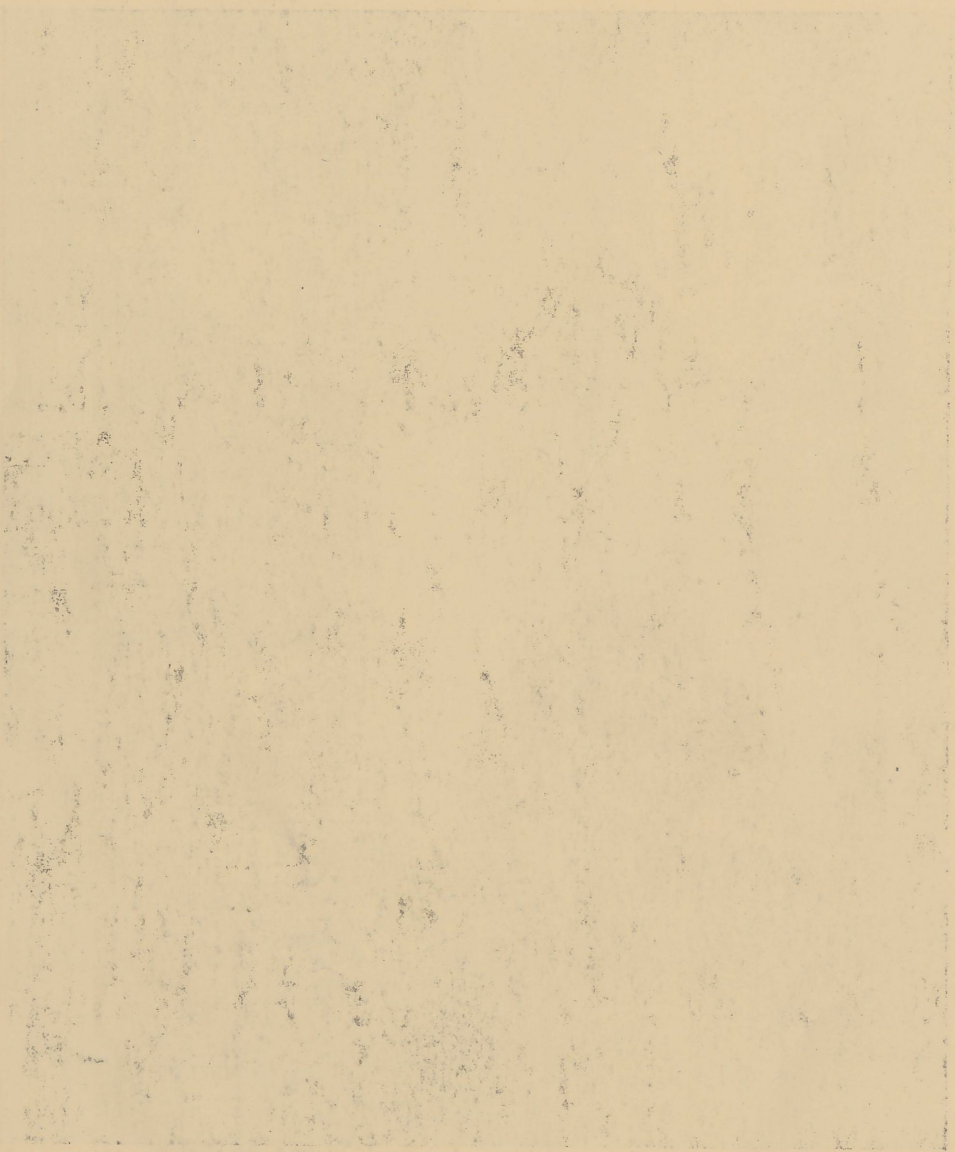
51—THE RAILROAD.
(Loaned by Mr. Harold A. Loeb.)

52—SNOW FROM THE SOUTH EAST.

CLEARING OF A SLEET STORM

CLEARING OF A SLEET STORM

BACK YARDS



A LITTLE TOWN

THE CORNER STORE

RED TELEGRAPH POLES

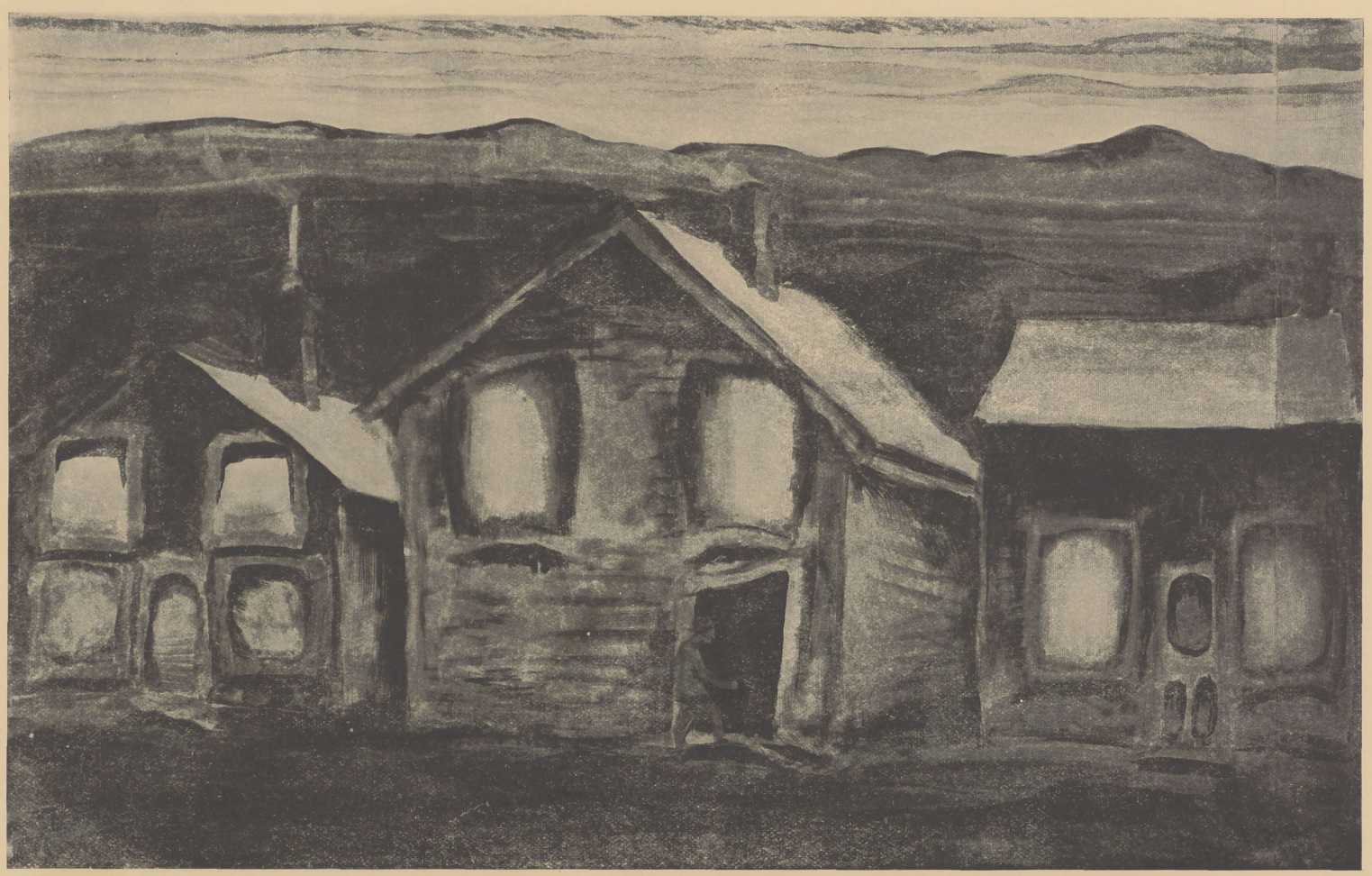
SUNLIGHT AFTER A SPRING RAIN

THE BLACK-EYED SHED

WIND OVER THE HILL

SPRING LIGHT

GOING HOME



MINERS' HUTS

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